

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 /017 W
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R 131133Z MAR 75
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO USDOC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9171
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMCONSUL KARACHI

UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 02194
E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP, PK
SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECT: INDUS HIGHWAY

REF: (A) KARACHI A-6, 1/17/75 (B) STATE 050974

1. KARACHI HAS REPORTED REF B TO ISLAMABAD FOR EMB ACTION. KARACHI AND ISLAMABAD COMMERCIAL OFFICERS DISCUSSED INDUS SUPER HIGHWAY PROJECT IN DETAIL FEBRUARY 3 WITH INDUS SUPER HIGHWAY COMMISSION IN ISLAMABAD. EMBASSY HAS NOT REPORTED PENDING RECEIPT BROCHURE BEING PREPARED BY HIGHWAY COMMISSION WHICH IS STILL NOT AVAILABLE.

2. PRESENT PROJECT WILL BE 850 MILES FROM KARACHI TO PESHAWAR, TWO-LANE SUPER HIGHWAY. RIGHT-OF-WAY BEING PURCHASED AND EVENTUAL PLANS AS PART OF SECOND PROJECT FOR ADDITIONAL TWO-LANE DIVIDEND HIGHWAY. PRESENT CONCEPT IS TO DIVIDE HIGHWAY INTO SEVEN TO NINE SEGMENTS WITH CONSTRUCTION TENDERS TO BE ISSUED SIMULTANEOUSLY. GOP HOPES THAT DOMESTIC CONTRACTORS WILL BE ABLE TO HANDLE MOST SEGMENTS BUT THAT TWO TO THREE SEGMENTS WILL GO TO INTERNATIONAL FIRMS AS "PACESSETTERS." HIGHWAY COMMISSION PLANS TO PURCHASE POOL OF EQUIPMENT AS DOMESTIC CONTRACTORS UNLIKELY TO FIND SUFFICIENT AND APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT IN PAKISTAN. ESTIMATED TOTAL PROJECT COST IS DOLS 300 MILLION OF WHICH DOLS 100 MILLION WILL BE COMPONENT.

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3. PROJECT DESIGN IN PROCESS PRESENTLY WITH NATIONALIZED NATIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES OF PAKISTAN (NESPAK) DEVELOPING

GENERAL ALIGNMENT, GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS, CHECK LISTS AND STANDARDIZATION. FIRMS TO DESIGN THE VARIOUS SECTORS HAVE IN GENERAL BEEN SELECTED FROM AMONG THOSE AVAILABLE IN PAKISTAN AND SEVERAL LETTERS OF INTENT SIGNED. HIGHWAY COMMISSION EXPECTS THAT BID DOCUMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION WILL BE AVAILABLE EARLY NEXT CY.

4. US TRADE OPPORTUNITY: HIGHWAY COMMISSION BELIEVES THAT BEST OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOREIGN FIRMS ARE IN SUPPLY OF POOL EQUIPMENT, CONSTRUCTION OF TWO TO THREE SEGMENTS AND SUBCONTRACTING SPECIAL ADVISERS IN DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT TO PAKISTANI HIGHWAY SEGMENT CONSULTANTS. COMMISSION PROVIDED PRELIMINARY LIST OF EQUIPMENT REQUIRED WHICH WAS PREPARED AT THE TIME IT WAS PROPOSED TO BUILD FOUR FULL LANE DIVIDED HIGHWAY IN ONE PROJECT. THIS LIST CARRIED TO US BY MEMBERS OF RECENT MINING/EARTHMOVING TRADE MISSION AND ADDITIONAL COPY BEING POUCHED IN USDOC. COMMISSION BELIEVES THAT POOL EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR PRESENT SMALLER PROJECT WILL BE APPROXIMATELY TWO-THIRDS OF EARLIER LIST.

5. FINANCING: IT IS BELIEVED THAT FINANCING HAS NOT BEEN ARRANGED FOR THIS PROJECT BUT THAT GOP PLANS TO APPROACH ALL POSSIBLE MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL SOURCES. IBRD AND ADB DID NOT GIVE WARM RECEPTION TO FEELERS WHEN PROJECT FIRST PROPOSED AS FOUR LANE DIVIDED HIGHWAY. GOP BELIVES THAT SCALED-DOWN PROJECT WILL GAIN BETTER RECEPTION. HIGHWAY COMMISSION PREFERS MULTILATERAL FINANCING AND OPEN BIDDING, PARTICULARLY FOR POOL EQUIPMENT. IT BELIVES US EQUIPMENT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO A LARGER NUMBER OF PAKISTANI AND INTERNATIONAL CONTRACTORS. HOWEVER, COMMISSION WOULD BE WILLING, IF NECESSARY, TO TIE BOTH SEGMENT CONTRACTS AND EQUIPMENT PURCHASES TO SPECIFIC NATIONAL SOURCES WHICH MIGHT OFFER APPROPRIATE FINANCING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ISLAMA02194
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750088-0657
From: ISLAMABAD
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750355/aaaabxfq.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 KARACHI A-6, 75 1/17/75, 75 STATE 050974
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolflhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 JUN 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <07 JAN 2004 by woolflhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAJOR PROJECT: INDUS HIGHWAY
TAGS: BEXP, PK
To: COM
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006